

SALMAGUNDI, No. VII.

Saturday, November 6, 1819.

FROM MY ELBOW CHAIR.

I HAVE long wished to introduce to my readers a lady, who practices a certain art, so much like downright witchcraft, that it is well for her she is neither old nor ugly, or she would certainly be in danger of the ordeal. Hitherto I have been deterred by the fear I may be accused of attempting to impose upon the public, by a revival of some of those stale superstitions, which the good sense of my countrymen rejects with such contempt when applied to their own native land. There are some countries particularly appropriated to feats of magic, and supernatural agency, and events said to take place in these fortunate regions, are received with great respect by persons, who would reject them with sovereign contempt, were the scene laid anywhere else. A story of second sight, or witch-

craft, is nothing, unless the *venue* is laid in the Highlands of Scotland, or some one of the western isles; and as to poisons, assassinations, adulteries, monkish villany, and sheeted spectres, one might tell such tales from morning till night, without alarming a single nursery, or disturbing a winter fire-side, unless they were Italianized, and the scene laid in the Appenines, in an old ruined castle.

Discouraged by these untoward circumstances, that lie in the way of all romantic adventure, and check the inventive powers of domestic genius, I have delayed until now the introduction of a character particularly worthy of being studied by the rest of her sex, nor should I have gained sufficient courage to do it now, did I not flatter myself with being able to explain every thing without resorting to the interposition of any extraordinary agency.

When I first became acquainted with this singular person, she was a young girl of about seventeen or eighteen, just entering upon the experiment of realising those dreams of the gay and beckoning world, which occupy the waking hours of anticipating youth. I remember it was at an assembly she first attracted my attention, though I could not till long afterwards tell exactly why, for her face though sufficiently

interesting was not such a one as catches the roving eyes of a ball-room connoisseur, and her figure was no way particularly distinguished. Still there was that in her appearance which caused me to pay particular attention to her movements during the whole evening, in the course of which she led me into at least half a dozen mistakes, by her mysterious art.

I inquired of Evergreen the name of the beautiful girl, with a wreath of roses about her hair, who danced with such exquisite grace and skill. Anthony was at that time, as at present, a complete connoisseur in these matters, and particularly valued himself on his knowledge of dancing, having taking private lessons of the celebrated Duport, during two whole winters. "You mean," said he, "the tall lady in spangles and feathers I presume?" "I presume I mean no such thing, I mean the middle sized lady, dancing opposite to her, who has neither spangles or feathers, that I can see." "My good friend," replied Anthony—"you never was more mistaken in your life, if you say that lady is a fine dancer. Why she hasn't performed a single step in the whole cotillion—take notice and see if I am not right."

As no man likes to have his taste questioned, even in the most insignificant affairs, I felt

myself called upon to support mine, and for this purpose watched the lady for some time, in order to detect Anthony in an error. Insensibly however, I was so completely beguiled by the easy grace, the gentle, chastened activity with which she sailed through the mazes of the dance, without study or effort, that I quite forgot the original motive for this scrutiny, and to this day cannot tell whether she executed any steps or not. I recollect however there were other ladies in the set, who paid such special attention to their feet, that they seemed to forget dancing did not entirely consist in feats of extraordinary agility that would do honour to a harlequin at the theatre, or a clown at the circus.

"Well—said Evergreen when the dance was finished—am I right, or am I wrong?" "O, perfectly right, if you mean that dancing consists in such enormities as that lady yonder committed in the last cotillion. However not to dispute the point, I confess if you please, she takes no steps—they are something a great deal better. I hope now you wont deny that she is the best dressed woman in the room, after I have shown such exemplary moderation in giving up this point." "Pooh!"—said Anthony, rather unceremoniously, as if he thought I was bantering—"Pooh—why she has nothing on her, but a white

muslin frock, and that paltry wreath of rose buds—I confess her foot is pretty, but then look what a shoe! It wants glitter, sir—it wants glitter." What was very provoking, I found on a closer inspection Anthony was right, and yet, such was the mysterious power exercised by this singular young lady that even this conviction did not destroy the illusion. I continued during the rest of the evening to admire her, as the best dressed woman in the room, although she wore nothing but a muslin frock and wreath of rose buds, and had not a single spangle on her shoes.

I met her frequently afterwards in public parties, and at social fire sides, where an acquaintance commenced that was only interrupted by my retirement into the country. On such occasions, though surrounded by women dressed in all the splendors of this age of wasteful prodigality, she always seemed to outdo them all, and I had often the pleasure of hearing my judgment confirmed by persons who had refined their taste by the habitual contemplation of classical models. The same mystery pervaded her behaviour and conversation, though the one never challenged observation, and the other neither sparkled or astonished. In the whole course of our acquaintance, at that time and since, I

cannot remember that she uttered any regular witticism, or special wise saying. All I know is, that without taking any pains to show off in studied declamation, her chat was playful, sometimes attic and always characterised by a species of feminine good sense that gave it a sort of dignity which awakened respect, without exciting any feeling of inferiority. Her conversation did not abound in fine sayings, but pleased from its general character, and if any thing, more in the recollection, than the actual enjoyment. In recalling these things, I have often been struck with little hits of character, and nice touches of wit or discrimination that escaped my notice at the time they were uttered. She never, I observed tasked her own mind to appear striking, or drew draughts upon others that might be inconvenient to pay, in those hours of evening relaxation, when men seek society to indulge in that easy interchange of thought which asks no effort, and courts neither admiration or applause. On these occasions she always appeared to advantage, especially when a *blue stocking* happened to be present. Though I have seen her deserted for the society of one of these declamatory ladies, I never failed to observe the recreants who had unwarily been attracted by some emphatic harangue, return after listening and yawning a little

while, to the shrine of unpretending modest propriety.

Something more than a year after our acquaintance, I commenced my seclusion in the country, and we did not meet for some years. On my return to the city I learned she was married to a young fellow of small fortune, who had been attached to her for a considerable time. Assuming the privilege of an old friend, and an old man, I called to see her, and was received with such unaffected hospitality both by herself and husband, that I renewed my intimacy, and am now quite domesticated in the house, where a goodly arm-chair is always reserved for my special use.

Though my friend had now past the hey-day of youth, I still found the same mysterious witchcraft hovering around her, and pervading every part of the establishment over which she presided. The first time I entered the house, I was alarmed with an air of gentility, and expense, which knowing the confined income of the husband, I could not help thinking reflected on the prudence of the wife. Every part seemed to be finished with a degree of liberality, not to say profusion, that apparently vied with the splendors of my friend Tubman's palace. As usual too, the lady appeared dressed quite as much

beyond the sphere of her income, as was the decorations of her house; and although I never found her without something about the parlour indicating she had been employed, still she looked and acted and spoke so like a perfect lady, that I could not stretch my faith to a belief of her having been actually busy in such a fine dress as she seemed to wear.

The first time I dined there, the like appearance completely imposed on me, and I went away in the evening accusing my little friend of wastefulness in the dinner, as well as extravagance in the table equipage. In short, not to impose too much on the credulity of my readers, by further details respecting this uncommon species of magical delusion, I was completely the dupe of this domestic Armida, and believed her husband on the high road to speedy ruin. This error continued to make me uneasy for a considerable time, until luckily, I thought of resorting to my old custom of analysing, a habit I recommend to my readers as furnishing an almost certain antidote to every species of deception.

The first discovery I was enabled to arrive at by this method, was that the furniture of the enchanted house, was in reality neither expensive or splendid, but on the contrary very plain; and

that it owed its sole charm to a certain uniform simplicity in the style and arrangement, which gave it that air of attic elegance which had deceived me so completely. There was no glare about the rooms; no tinsel or gaudy colours; none of that common and vulgar contrast we see so often, between the extreme of finery in one part, and the extreme of meanness in the other. It was a family circle, where every object possessed a kindred likeness, and evidently partook of the same general physiognomy. The servants neither wore livery or gold lace; but then it was a pleasure to receive a glass of water from them, for they were always clean, and never out at the elbows.

Proceeding in the development of this web of magic, I went so far as to count the dishes at one of these imaginary sumptuous dinners, and also to examine with a critical eye the table equipage, piece by piece. To my utter astonishment, there were but three dishes of meat, but then they were well cooked, and neatly served. What I had mistaken for finery in the table equipage, turned out to be nothing more than a table cloth as white as snow, with spoons and knives and forks, as bright as silver. Here, as in all the other household arrangements, the same sense of propriety, the

same congruity of one part with another, the same nice adaptation of means and objects, joined to the easy deportment, and graceful suavity of the mistress constituted all the mystery of that deception under which I had laboured.

The great key however to the whole enchantment, I found out at last, was in the presiding genius of this admirable wife. It was she that threw this air of elegance on all around, and metamorphosed even the old fashioned arm chair into a superb Grecian sopha. Versed from her childhood in all the indescribable secrets of good breeding; familiar with all its essential attributes, and taught by long experience, the lesson which only experience can teach, she remained mistress of herself on all occasions, and being always at her ease, made every one easy around her. She knew that the splendors of vulgarity, far from disguising, only rendered it more glaring, as the ornaments of ugliness increase its deformity, and that nothing so completely destroys the involuntary respect we pay to equipage and show, as the knowledge that they are exhibited by those who either enjoy them at the expense of the essential comforts of life, or of some industrious mechanic who will never be paid. In one word, she knew that a well-bred woman, gifted with a nice sense of

propriety, will make a house appear more genteel, than all the fine decorations in the world.

THE ART OF LIVING.

“Every part of the world shoots up daily into more subtlety; the very spider weaves her caul with more art and cunning to entrap the fly.”

As the great business of my life, has consisted rather in observing what other people were about, than doing any thing myself, I have come at last by a long habit of watchfulness, to be acquainted with various modes of getting an honest livelihood, that have hitherto escaped the attention of the town. The art of living is certainly the most important of all, being of immediate, as well as universal necessity, and it has consequently been brought to greater perfection than any other whatever, especially in great cities, which are generally the resort of that ingenious class of mankind, which is emphatically said to live by its wits. In the simplicity that characterised the days of my early recollections,

people lived pretty much alike in New York. There was little variety in their modes, and the only distinctions were those of rich and poor. The rich lived by their money, the poor by labour, and the sources from whence each drew their means of subsistence, were as well known as the tea water pump, or the fresh water pond, since dignified with the name of the Collect, and which like the pitcher of the Danaides seems fated never to be filled, notwithstanding all the efforts of our worthy and public spirited corporation.

In process of time, the modes of gaining an honest livelihood multiplied from various causes —from the natural and irresistible force of that spirit of improvement said to be inherent in man —from the influx of ingenious foreigners flocking to this new world from all parts of the old —and from the aptness of our own countrymen to imitate new modes and fashions.

As my great ambition is to merit a place among the numerous class of worthies of the present day, whose whole time is taken up in benevolent projects for enabling people to live without the necessity of wholesome employment, I will take this opportunity of introducing to the acquaintance of the world, three or four ingenious persons, who I consider the greatest

masters of the art of living, that have ever fallen under my observation. Three of these are natives of foreign countries, so that the United States cannot claim the honour of their inventions; but the fourth is a genuine American, and as I believe his mode of living is entirely original, I claim the merit for our own country.

The first person I shall bring forward, is the son of an old school-fellow of mine, who was born to better things, according to the fashionable phraseology. His father was a person of good family and credit, whose fortune was not much, but whose business enabled him to give his son an excellent education, and to bring him up in idleness. He was a pleasant fellow, of good address, who sung an excellent song, and was a great favourite among the idle, the dissipated, and all those, who are very much obliged to any man, who will assist them in killing time. In this way he lived about town, without imbibing any habits that were actually vicious, or doing any thing that could claim the merit of being altogether useful, until his father died, leaving him his business. The young man carried it on for some time, that is, he left it to a boy, while he continued his old habit of amusing, until at last, he became *unfortunate* in business, as the polite expression is. In a word he failed by his extra-

vagance and want of attention, and ruined two worthy industrious families entirely.

Every body pitied him, and indeed he deserved pity notwithstanding his faults had merited punishment. He continued for sometime, while his clothes were genteel, and the little money reserved for his immediate necessities lasted, to be received with something like complacency—his songs were considered an equivalent for civility, and sometimes even for a dinner. In a little time however his clothes grew the worse for wear—he was consequently considered rather a disreputable visitor, and it being rumoured among his friends that he had actually been detected in the fact of attempting to borrow money of one of them, they all with one accord set about giving him advice. One advised him to go into business again, but on being solicited to give him some assistance either in money or credit, turned his back, and asked if he thought him a fool. Various indeed were the ways pointed out by his friends, but as they contented themselves with giving him advice, instead of assistance, he could not follow their suggestions. Accordingly they all took offence at his neglect of such friendly attention, agreed that nothing good was to be expected of him, and shut their doors ever after. I cannot blame

them much, not I. His conduct might possibly be excused by the neglect of his father in not instilling into him early habits of industry—but people in general have so much to do in palliating their own faults, that it is not to be expected they will take the trouble of doing the same good office for others.

But these wretched cast-offs of the prudent and worldly wise, are often gifted with sources of inward content and satisfaction, unknown to their betters. I know not how it is, but the same careless, unthinking and uncalculating spirit that brings a man to the embraces of poverty, often enables him to bear them with such admirable indifference as almost dignifies his folly, with the honours of philosophy. It is a pity however that a man cannot easily stop when he is going down hill. But so it was, the same carelessness, which brought about, and enabled him to support with so much indifference this depression of his fortunes, by a very natural consequence, depressed him still more. He was just as careless as ever, and the consequence was that he ran in debt, and not being able to pay, he went to prison. It has been said with truth that the discipline of a jail seldom makes a man better. The causes probably are, that, notwithstanding what philanthropists have said,

prisons are more frequently filled with the imprudent and unprincipled, than with the mere victims of inevitable misfortune. Hence the company a man falls into on such occasions, is not likely to better either his manners or his morals. At all events, it is, or it was in the times of which I am speaking, a deadly disgrace for a man to go to jail, and disgrace either breaks the heart, or renders it ever after callous to shame.

Poor *Noll*, for that was his name—came out of this school of misery and vice, by one of those acts of insolvency now so disgracefully common, and so admirably calculated for the encouragement of all those who run in debt without ever meaning to pay, that it is no wonder people now neither mind running in debt, or going to jail. The world was all before him—and though he would willingly have turned his back upon it, for shame of his late lodgings and his present miserable condition, life still was life—and the very light of the sun was worth living for. There was an actual necessity of eating—and as his early education had disgusted him with manual labour—some other means of obtaining food must be found to “keep,” as he said to me once—“to keep the wolf from the door.” It would be tedious to follow this poor wight, through his different declensions; it is

sufficient to say, that he regularly went through all the degrees in the great school of poverty, until at length, as he informed me the last time I saw him, which was in the park, he bethought himself of turning his learning to account.

This was a lucky idea, and more than answered his expectations. His different modes of life during the latter part at least, had brought him acquainted with almost all that numerous class of society, which lives by appealing in various ways to the sympathies of the human heart. In a word he knew all the beggars in town. Being accidentally employed by one of these to write a petition, he succeeded so well as to make the fellow's fortune, and established such a literary character among the fraternity, that business flowed in apace, and no beggar could think of making contributions but with one of his inimitable appeals in hand. He was then he affirmed in such great repute that orders were sent him from various parts of the United States for petitions, and although these rogues never paid him if they could help it, still he managed to make a very comfortable livelihood, and at the same time to do as many charitable deeds as most people, for though he gave nothing himself, he was the cause of other people giving. During the preceding winter, he had burnt out up-

wards of a hundred poor families—broke several hundred legs and arms—thrown countless people into the most excruciating rheumatisms, and made innumerable widows and orphans. His business he observed had however diminished very much since the late laws of the corporation against itinerant beggars, and he was now balancing whether to turn Spanish patriot, and rob on the high seas, or set up for a broker. At parting he very obligingly offered his services in case they were required by any of my friends, and whispered me not to be affronted, for that he was the author of some of the most admired of the charitable addresses, published for some time past. But this I can by no means credit, I merely mention it to show the impudence of the fellow.

I am reminded of the next ingenious professor of the art of living, by an accidental rencontre, with a wandering sort of a vagabond, whom I remember many years ago, an idle, pleasant, good for nothing being, that nobody could be angry with, and nobody respect. In former times, I used generally by some accident or other to meet him once or twice a year in my walks, and his appearance was at all times so indifferent as to challenge the first advances from an old acquaintance better dressed than

himself. Accordingly I was accustomed to stop, and inquire how he got on in the world, and as he made no secret of his poverty, his details often gave me an insight into the truth of the old saying, that "one half the world dont know how the other half lives."

During my late residence in the country, I had lost sight of him entirely, until the other day, when I was surprised to meet him, dressed in the sober substantial style of a respectable and independent citizen. His hair was neatly powdered, he wore an ivory headed cane, and his whole dress was so scrupulously neat, that I felt an involuntary respect for him, which occasioned some hesitation in asking the customary questions about his mode of getting on in the world. To say the truth, my old acquaintance seemed rather more shy than myself, and as little inclined to make disclosures, as I was to ask questions. As it never was my way to put a man in mind of old times, when he was inclined to forget them, we parted without any explanation of his apparent good fortune.

Happening however, to mention this to a friend who also remembered the late shabby costume of this mysterious wanderer, whose name, as I ought to have mentioned before, is Claudio Crummie, he fell into a hearty laugh,

and assured me that Claudio was beyond all question the most ingenious man of the age. "After exhausting," continued my friend, "all the customary methods of living without doing any thing, practised by gentlemen of his cloth, he at length set his wits to work and invented a mode of levying contributions, so simple yet so effectual, that it deserves to be made public for the benefit of those who wish to pass for gentlemen, and enjoy all the comforts of life, without money, friends, or occupation.

"He began by inquiring into the character of every man about town, likely to give any thing away in charity, and drew up a regular alphabetical list of the whole. He then made it his business to ascertain whose example in giving away a few dollars, would be likely to operate upon this man, and whose upon that, and by this means was enabled to take them in most infallible succession. Having completed his list, and perfected the arrangement of names, to the number of near one thousand, he began his operations. He went to the first name on the list, told him a tale of having failed in business, by unavoidable misfortunes—mentioned his intention of beginning again in a small way, to maintain a wife and eight children, all dependent on his exertions, and concluded by observing that

Mr. such a one, (whose example he knew would have a powerful influence,) had just given him a few dollars, to help him along. In this manner he went through his list, and gained a pretty sum, with which he commenced gentleman. When it was nearly spent, he had another list ready to levy upon, and so infallible is his success, that he now calculates upon this resource, with the certainty of an annuity for life. He has lived in this way for nearly ten years. In the morning he is seen busily prying into butcher's stalls, and market baskets, and selecting some nice dainty for his dinner; between twelve and one, with his hair powdered, his polished ivory headed cane, and dressed plain, but exceedingly neat, he is seen every day, at the coffee-house, taking his glass of punch, his biscuit and his little slice of codfish—reading the newspapers, and finding fault with the democrats, like a man of great substance. His benefactors, if they happen to recollect him, are pleased with his looking so comfortable, and flatter themselves, that he is getting on well in business again. At two precisely he departs for home, and nobody that sees him pass up Wall-street, would hesitate in setting him down for a responsible freeholder. For my part, as I before observed, I consider him the greatest genius I have ever known, for

at the end of six thousand years and more, he has invented an original method of living, that enables him to enjoy all the blessings of independence only at the trifling expense of a few lies, and a little innocent hypocrisy."

I have dilated so copiously on the merits of these two worthies, that I must content myself with a very short notice of the others. The one lives by going about with subscriptions for the relief of unfortunate people of every kind and degree. Whenever a poor family is burnt out, or any striking misfortune happens to any obscure individual in the community, this worthy creature always writes a most pathetic account of the distresses of the poor sufferers, which he goes round with himself. He manages to pick up a comfortable living in this way, by charging a commission for his trouble, and having once been a broker, his per centage generally amounts to nearly the whole sum, so that the poor fare pretty much like his old employers. In this way, our hero manages to gain two great objects—he is not only enabled to live, but passes among charitable people, for one of the most benevolent creatures in the world. The companion piece to this sketch, is a very decent regular church going man, who has prospered exceedingly in his temporal affairs by being a

philanthropist. He never hears of any meeting for the purpose of civilizing the Africans, converting the Asiatics, or benefitting the poor, by enabling them to live without work, and educate their children at the expense of other people, without attending at it, making himself exceedingly busy, and getting chosen treasurer of the society. By these means he manages the contributions of one half the charitable people about town, and elsewhere, and like the worthy licentiate in Gil Blas, has grown rich, solely by attending to the concerns of the poor.

OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

I FIND in proportion as our paper circulates in the country, where I am credibly informed, it makes head against the Almanack, and is read with great attention on Sunday evenings, the number of our correspondents increases accordingly. Such indeed is the crowd of letters received by every post, notwithstanding the frequent robberies of the mail, that it is quite impossible to publish one half of those which are

worthy of the public attention. We must therefore content ourselves with giving an analysis of the least important, reserving our spare columns for such as are more particularly interesting.

In fact it would be an endless task to enumerate all the complaints of our worthy correspondents, some of which are really so singular, that I question whether they have ever before occupied the attention of the skilful in such matters. Others contain the secret history of a vast number of people we never heard of before, but who it seems by the envy and ill will they excite, must be persons of note at home. Others again are filled with scandalous anecdotes, and inundoes calculated to do more mischief than downright scandal. All these have been consigned to the flames for fear they might possibly lead us into the temptation of publishing what was not true. We are old fashioned enough to think, that the publication of a falsehood respecting the character of any man whatever, is quite inexcusable no matter on what authority it is done. The contradicting it afterwards is no sufficient atonement, since of the hundreds who read the charge, it often happens not one half of them ever see the refutation. We will now pro-

ceed to note the contents of some of our letters received in the course of the last week.

One gentleman as usual, complains of his wife, who had ever since her marriage been a perfect pattern of a sober, discreet, domestic matron. Lately however he had occasion to make a short voyage, leaving her at home in charge of his household, when all at once she broke out a gay extravagant fine lady, attended auctions, tipped carbonated mead at the fountain, and actually walzed with a foreign non-descript at a public ball. Having turned this letter over to Evergreen, he says there is no remedy in the case, but for the gentleman to stay at home, or take his wife with him, when he goes abroad again.

The second letter, I shall notice comes from a worthy merchant of this city, who had been in good credit about change, for twenty years past, but was so taken up the other day with reading our last number, that he let a note lay over at the bank, by which he lost his credit entirely. He requests me to certify to the fact; but though I have the most complete reliance on his veracity, and think the accident extremely natural, I hereby recommend him to get some responsible broker to advertise, that he will take his notes at a small discount.

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Another letter comes from a very discreet old lady, who describes herself as the mother and guardian of several minors, whose property she invested in the United States bank. The affectionate mother complains with some justice, I think, that while the worthy directors are building a splendid marble palace to cost nearly a million of dollars perhaps, she and her little family are reduced to actual distress, by the loss of those dividends which it is presumed are to be expended on the palace. She makes no doubt but it will be a very splendid building, and add much to the beauty of the city; but as neither herself, her children, or any of her neighbours similarly circumstanced, ever expect to visit Philadelphia, or enjoy the delight of contemplating this magnificent structure, she submits with great diffidence, whether it is altogether reasonable to employ their money in this manner. The old lady concludes, by stating that she has consulted a member of congress on the subject, who says that it would have been quite as well to build a less expensive temple to the paper Plutus, or at all events, that those who expect to enjoy its splendors, ought to pay for it themselves.

The next letter, I shall notice comes from a notable *quid-nunc*, who complains that we take

no part in politics, and entirely neglect telling our readers the news. He maintains that the excuse of there being no news stirring, is no sort of apology, since it would be easy enough to invent a reasonable quantity every day, and contradict it the next. By this means, the lovers of news might be gratified at an easy rate, and those who cater for them, fill their papers regularly, to the great edification of their readers, who would be doubly astonished, first by believing in the wonder, and next by discovering there was not a word of truth in it. As there appears something feasible in all this, we shall take it into serious consideration.

Then follows a communication from a very singular personage, just arrived in this country, and as usual, anxious to give us the benefits of his skill in British manufactures. He states that he is by profession a manufacturer of plots, in which he has been employed for some years past, with great success. The business however, has become rather stale abroad, and not having been adequately rewarded lately, he has come, among many other worthies, to try his fortune in this land of liberty.

He affirms that not one of the plots for assassinating kings, putting down religion, burning towns and the like, played off with such ef-

fect of late years, both in England, and on the continent, has been got up without his special agency. He was the sole contriver of the attack on the prince regent in London, and the attempt to assassinate the duke of Wellington in Paris. Indeed they are evidently by the same author, as in neither case could the pistol—if it was a pistol—nor the man that fired it—if it was a man—be found.

He also claims the honour of the late conspiracy, against the emperor Alexander, and the design of shooting the emperor of Austria, lately played off in Italy, as an excuse for certain acts of authority, which would otherwise have been rather unpalatable. His master pieces however, and those on which he values himself most, are his two last productions. One is the plot to set fire to the city of London, lately announced in the British papers, and received with a burst of applause by all lovers of the regent, and national debt. The other, is the diabolical “school plot,” at Manchester, where the little children are taught “to hate kings and priests,” with the unequalled appendix of Mrs. Walker, who came to that devoted city “to preach, and teach the people to make revolutionary pikes.” The single phraze “revolutionary pikes,” he thinks a perfect master piece, unequalled by :

Titus Oates, or any other manufacturer of plots that ever existed.

The gentleman desires to inform the public in general, and those out of office in particular, that if they want a plot of the administration against state rights; a conspiracy to turn out honest men and put in rogues—or to plunge the nation into a war with Great Britain, he has several on hand, which are quite as good as new, and with a little alteration, will suit this, or any other country. He particularly recommends one plot for perpetuating southern influence, which he thinks in a year or two may be brought out with very great effect. Should any person want articles in his line, he is to be found in the large stone building on the right of the City Hall, where he resides for effect, the sombre hue and grated windows being wonderfully calculated for his business.

The next letter is from a lady who complains of the charitable societies, for accepting benefits from the managers of the theatre and circus, as she is fully satisfied the money thus raised will never turn out well. It is her opinion, at all events, that so long as the orthodox people of the town set their faces against theatrical amusements, and the orthodox preachers declaim against their immoral tendency, they might as

well be consistent, and decline sharing the gains of such iniquities. She concludes by expressing her determination to withdraw her subscription, as she does not choose her money should be in such bad company.

I shall conclude this paper, with a letter, which though written more than a century ago, lately came into my hands, and appears worthy of preservation, as descriptive of the times in which the author figured. It is addressed to master alderman Van Breucklen, after whom the town of Brooklyn was first named, and who was one of the pillars, or rather sleepers of what was called in the days of classic Dutch, "The Oude Kerck" in Garden-street. This street was so denominated from its adjoining the garden, in old times the property of master alderman Johannis de Groodt, a person of good memory but little judgment. The writer of this curious letter, was it appears the fourth in succession of the same family that had given sextons to this venerable church for four Dutch generations, which are twice as long as most others. The original is in the language in general use at that time, and the translation is by Will Wizard, whose late mysterious silence, I shall proceed to account for ere long, unless he returns to his duty.

DE SMEES VLY.

(Smith's Fly,) Sept. 3, 1702.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,

Being ordained the fourth in descent, as sexton of this the only true church in the city of New York, (as it hath been called, or rather as I may say, grievously miscalled by the English interlopers), I consider it my special, nay, bidden duty to present to your right worshipful, as acting church warden in the present time being, the manifest misbehaviours which follow herewith, and hereafter.

Imprimis—Certain interlopers, calling themselves presbyterians, have lately built themselves up a thing, the which they do call by the unseemly and pagan name of a meeting-house, which hath never a steeple, wherewithal, and the bell whereof doth hang within a little place marvellously resembling a sentry-box stuck on the roof. Not content with building this pernicious novelty, as it were directly under our noses, they have procured a bell more than twice exceeding ours, the which they do incontinently ring in our ears, so loud and so long, as to drown not only the sound of our bell, but moreover to swallow up the voice of master Van Ditmars, as he singeth the first psalm.

Item—Standing the Sabbath before the last, partly behind the third pillar on the left hand, close by the memorial which hath been erected to the sweet-scented memory of master Myn-dert Van Haggewout, late baker of New Year cookeries, which did manifestly excel all others, I did plainly see madam Rem Van Der Beek, beating up the cushion in her great square pew at the north west corner, whereby she caused it to wax so soft and delectable, that she did incontinently fall asleep, before master Van Ditmars got to the middle of the one hundred and nineteenth psalm.

Item—While I was busily set to parting two pestilent curs, which it seemeth to me do take upon themselves to come to church and disturb the congregation, insomuch as they belong to master deacon Swaghauser and master deacon Vander Donck, this caused me to stoop down, the widow Van Bussum's pew being then wide open, by reason it was exceeding hot weather, I did see the red clocks of her fine worsted hose, higher than became a woman of good beseeming —even above the instep! Whereupon the devil tempted me, and I did forget the quarrelsome curs outright, and also omitted to hand the bags, into the which our congregation, put their alms, or make a bow of apology. For which grievous

sins of omission, neglects and backslidings therewithal, the dominie did reprehend me sorely, saying unto me, that in all foretimes, even in the three generations mine ancestors had held the place of sexton, the like had never happened before.

Item—On Sabbath last, a young damsel, whose name I keep secret out of respect to her worshipful family, appeared in the middle aisle of our church that was never so scandalized before, with a white veil all over her face, whereby the congregation had their curiosity sorely raised, and some thereof were grievously affrighted, thinking it might peradventure be a ghost, dressed up in a winding sheet. Moreover, right worshipful, good master Van Ditmars, was so confounded, marvelling what it was, that he did set a long metre tune unto a short metre psalm, to the utter confusion of alderman master Jacobus Flodder, who was always used to strike in the bass, before the rest of the people.

Item—On the evening of the same day, (a sore day to the church) walking past the doors as is my dutiful custom, just between day-light and dark, to see that the swine have not begrimed the pillars, by rubbing, as they are accustomed, against them, I did detect a naughty boy chalking unseemly words upon the church door.

I was exceeding wroth thereat, and did ponder unto myself that the like had never happened before to any of our family to the fourth generation upwards, and that of a truth the teaching little boys to write without inducting them into manners therewithal, was one of the new fashions introduced by the interlopers, verily the Englishmen.

Item—About three or four weeks after, for I did wickedly omit to set down the day, as in duty bound, and as my ancestors had done before me, even to the fourth generation backwards, I did detect master Van Slaghboom, audibly coughing and blowing his nose immediately thereafter, albeit he had never a cold, as I verily believe, to provoke such unheard of enormities, and your right worshipful especially knows, that nobody is allowed to do such things, except when the dominie beginneth himself, or while master Van Ditmars, is looking out the psalm.

Item—I desire to complain of one Donald M'Selfish, or Shelfish, for I opine not his actual denomination, the pretended sexton of yon tabernacle, I did describe unto your right worshipful. This interloping varlet—the Lord forgive me, right worshipful, for uttering such an unseemly word—besides ringing the bell, all the

time master Van Ditmars, is singing the first psalm, doth sneer, as I am credibly told, at my little cocked hat, the which hath been in the church for four generations. He likewise affirmeth most irreverently, that the Lord cannot understand a Dutch sermon, thereby insinuating that all our prayers have been thrown away. The reason of all which unchristian backbitings I do humbly opine is because the excellent madam Van Dam, the lieutenant-governor's lady mother, did pay me the compliment to say, that I did precede a funeral procession with a goodly reverence; the like of which was not to be seen elsewhere.

Item—Being fearful of making my letter of unseemly length, I will conclude with possessing your right worshipful, with the wicked practice among certain young people, especially the young damsels, who wear new bonnets and the like. These do come trapesing into church, even after the bell has ceased to ring, whereby the sound of their footsteps is heard all over the place, and the congregation, instead of looking reverently at the dominie, or master Van Ditmars, giving out the psalm, as in duty bound, do all turn their heads incontinently towards these latterlings. These irreverent backsliders, have moreover an unseemly way of passing by

me without taking notice, as they come into the church, albeit the dominie always maketh me a reverend bow, and the illustrious alderman Van Quidder, who did give six brass candlesticks to the church, always pulleth his cocked hat, quite off from his head, whenever he doth encounter me. It hath been maliciously whispered, that the alderman doth me this courtesy to obtain my vote; but verily this is a calumny invented by ill disposed persons who think jesting on the clergy becoming.

I rest, right worshipful,
Your humble suitor,

IAN ROEDHAER.

I shall fill up the remaining space of the present number, with the following little Poem, which accompanied a letter lately received from my friend, the young Virginian, who has been all summer too much taken up with gallanting the ladies at Berkeley springs, to write any thing but poetry. It is best however to let him speak for himself.

“THE great Alleghany ridge,” says he, “being between the head waters of all the rivers run-

ning westward and eastward, to the Mississippi and Atlantic, offers no outlet for its surplus produce, except by tedious roads running through the defiles of the mountains. The people who inhabit this region, are for the most part a race of ‘mighty hunters before the Lord,’ who cultivate a little grain, and seek their animal food in the solitudes around them. They are a sturdy race; full of haughty notions of independence, and their occupation of hunting, being connected with the ideas of hardihood, courage, loneliness, and danger, affords the materials for a number of little traditions which I have heard among the people of these mountains. They are apt sometimes to be benighted in the hills, where there are instances of their being lost, and never heard of afterwards, although they often carry a horn with them for the purpose of making signals. The other day I was shown the ruins of a log hut in one of the little narrow vales, with a brook running through it, and a strip of green on either side; it was connected with a little story that furnished the materials for the following, which I send you to be used according to your discretion.”

THE HUNTER OF ALLEGHANY.

THE Hunter is gone from his home in the vale,
To chace the wild deer on the mountain alone,
Though dark is the morning, and raw the rude
gale,
That moans round the hill where the Hunter is
gone.

It is lonely and desert, no hut to be seen,
No bed but the rude rock, no cloak but the skies,
And the torrent that foams its rough ridges be-
tween,
Oft stops the lone Hunter as homeward he hies.

O, cold blows the north wind, and fast falls the
snow,
The tracks are all cover'd that guided his way;
'Tis dark in the depths of the valley below,
And the last tints of daylight are fading away.

'Tis night—and around the lone hut in the vale,
The snows drift, and cumber the windows and
door,
Cold, dreary, and dismal now moans the sad gale,
I fear me, our Hunter will ne'er return more.

And so fears the good wife, that sits by the fire,
A listening the blast, as it rattles the door,
And draws to the chimney, still nigher and nigher,
She fears that her good man will ne'er come
back more.

'Tis midnight—and yet blows the whirlwind of
snow,
And louder the blast moans adown the lone vale,
And still sits the good wife, all wakeful with wo,
To think of the Hunter that bides the sharp gale.

Is that his loud horn that resounds on the hill?
Or is it his voice moaning hollow and low?
'Tis only the fiend of the storm howling shrill,
And chiding his train through the mountains of
snow.

There's a noise at the door—'tis the Hunter is
come!

She runs to the door, but no Hunter is there—
'Tis his dog who through snow drifts has found
his way home,
While his master is freezing, God only knows
where.

He looks in the wife's face, he runs to the door,
And wistfully whining in accents of wo,
Invites her to follow, while he tracks before—
She wishes to follow, yet trembles to go.

But perhaps 'tis not far, and there's time yet to
save

The poor wand'ring pilgrim that's lost in the hills,
For a lover, a mistress such perils would brave,
Shall a wife then decline what a mistress fulfils?

They have brav'd the dark night, and the keen
pelting wind;

Cold, cold blew the blast, and the snow fell
amain,

But none know if the Hunter they ever did find,
Nor wife, dog, or Hunter, e'er came home again.

The hut is deserted, yet none e'er ask why,
For few ever visit that valley so lone,
And those who may chance the log ruin to spy,
Think its tenants are all to the west country gone.

But one day or other, when years are past by,
Some Huntsman may traverse that mountain so
drear,

And shrinking with horror perchance will descry,
Three skeletons whitening, some precipice near.

And ponder, as sadly he leans on his gun,
And feels his hair bristle with horrible fear,
What ruffian or wild beast, this foul deed has
done,

Then turn him away, and pursue the wild deer.